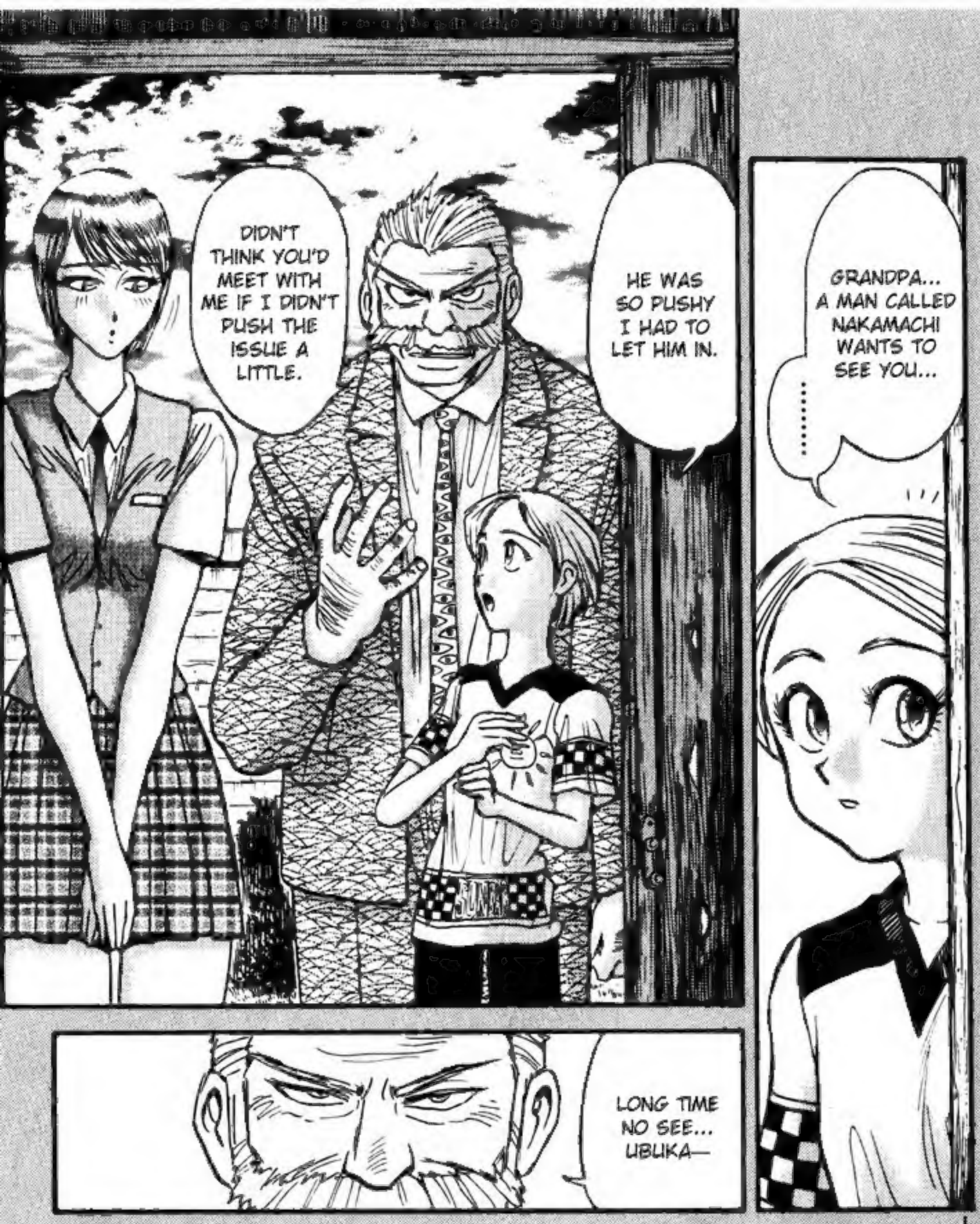

DIDN'T THINK YOU'D MEET WITH ME IF I DIDN'T PUSH THE ISSUE A LITTLE.
HE WAS SO PUSHY I HAD TO LET HIM IN.
GRANDPA... A MAN CALLED NAKAMACHI WANTS TO SEE YOU...
.....
LONG TIME NO SEE... UBUKA—

Act 3

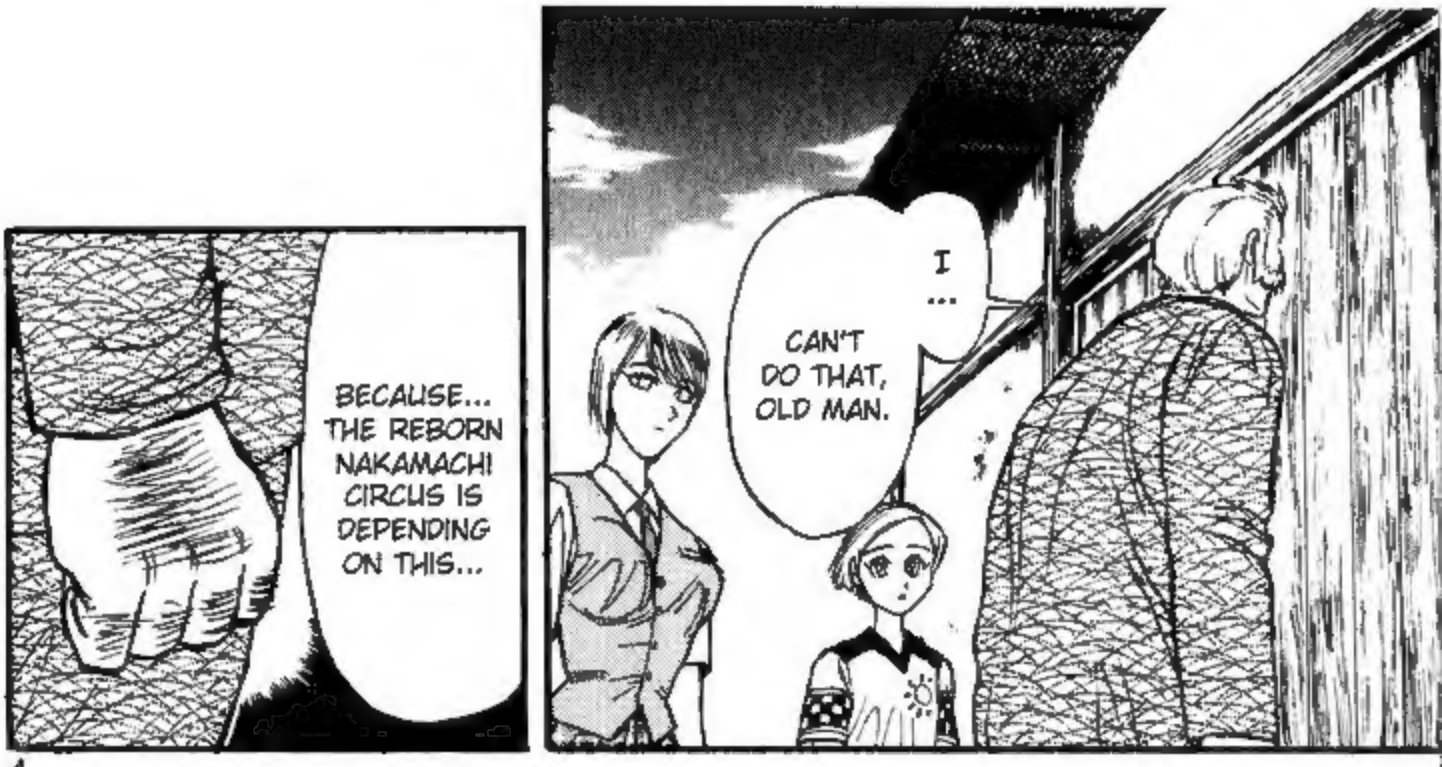
Ubukata Houan

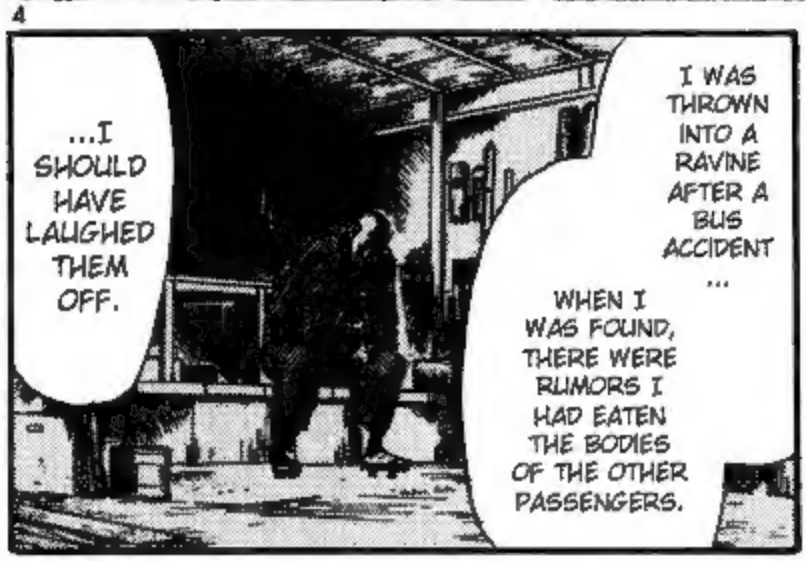
2

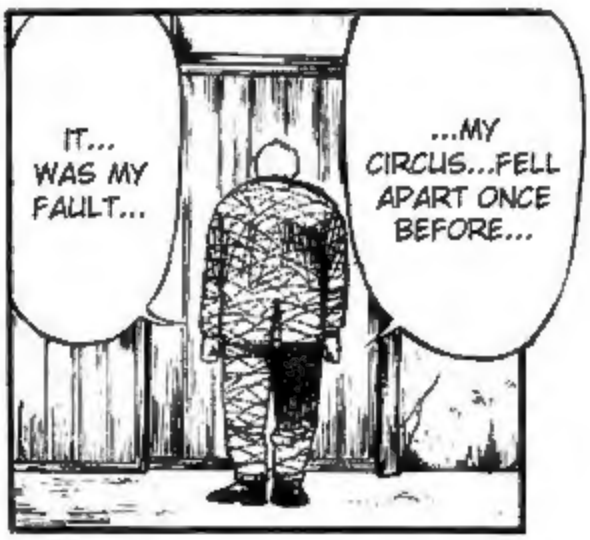
UBUKATA HOUAN!

WH-WHAT THE HELL IS WITH THE SURPRISE ATTACK, GEEZER!?

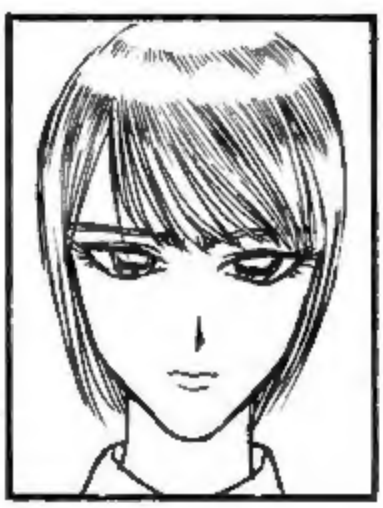
'SCUSE US...
WE'VE COME TO BORROW THE TIGHTROPE WALKING EQUIPMENT YOU TOOK WITH YOU.
UH?
OH, YEAH.
WHAT HAVE YOU COME HERE FOR...
SHI-NOBU?
ONE OF OUR PERFORMERS, SHIROGANE.
SHE'S HERE TO CHECK THE EQUIPMENT'S CONDITION.
AND THIS IS?
3
KEH... SO YOU FOUND MORE PERFOR-MERS.
I HAVE NO OBLIGATION TO DO ANYTHING FOR YOU.
BUT GO AWAY.
MY NAME IS SHIROGANE. THANK YOU IN ADVANCE FOR YOUR TROUBLE.


I ...
CAN'T DO THAT, OLD MAN.
BECAUSE... THE REBORN NAKAMACHI CIRCUS IS DEPENDING ON THIS...


I WAS THROWN INTO A RAVINE AFTER A BUS ACCIDENT ...
WHEN I WAS FOUND, THERE WERE RUMORS I HAD EATEN THE BODIES OF THE OTHER PASSENGERS.
...I SHOULD HAVE LAUGHED THEM OFF.


...MY CIRCUS...FELL APART ONCE BEFORE...
IT... WAS MY FAULT...

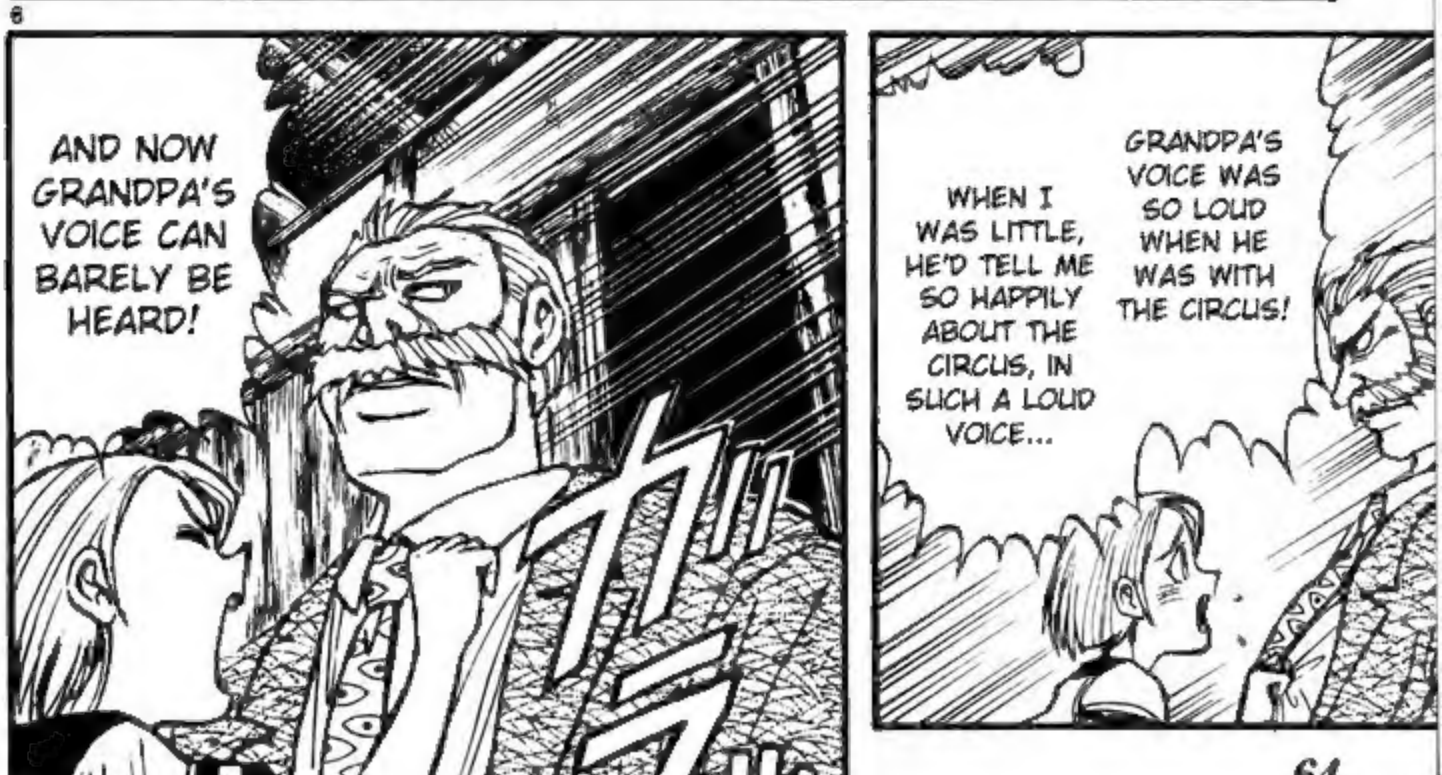
MY PATIENCE ...
JUST WASN'T ENOUGH.



I... MY...

THAT'S A FINE THING FOR A WORM LIKE YOU TO BE SAYING AFTER ALL THESE YEARS!
AFTER YOU'VE TAKEN THE CIRCUS AWAY FROM MY GRANDPA!!
WH-WHAT ... WHAT ...!
YOU'RE... UBUKATA'S GRAND-CHILD...
HIS WORK IN THE CIRCUS WAS HIS REASON FOR LIVING!
AFTER ALL, GRANDPA WAS TOO OLD TO BE HIRED BY ANY OTHER CIRCUSES!
SO JUST HOLD OUT FOR NOW.
PEOPLE WILL SOON FORGET.
BUT THEY'RE ONLY RUMORS.
BOSS, ENDURE IT FOR NOW. THERE ARE A LOT OF THINGS BEING SAID...
WHAT WILL BECOME OF THIS FAMILY?
IF OUR LEADER CAN'T PERFORM...
WHAT WILL BECOME OF THE NAKAMACHI CIRCUS?
IF YOU HANDLE THIS BADLY...

AMONG THE PEOPLE YOU ATE WAS A WOMAN WHO HAD CHILDREN! PLEASE APOLOGIZE!
TELL THE TRUTH, NAKAMACHI-SAN!
YOUR TEETH ARE STRONG, RIGHT?
DID YOU EAT THOSE PEOPLE?
PLEASE HOLD OUT, BOSS!!


AND NOW GRANDPA'S VOICE CAN BARELY BE HEARD!
WHEN I WAS LITTLE, HE'D TELL ME SO HAPPILY ABOUT THE CIRCUS, IN SUCH A LOUD VOICE...
GRANDPA'S VOICE WAS SO LOUD WHEN HE WAS WITH THE CIRCUS!

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B-BUT... GRAND-PA...
DON'T TALK ABOUT THESE THINGS, RYOUKO!

AH, WHAT ARE YOU DOING, SHINOBU!?
DON'T YOU GO INTO MY SHED!
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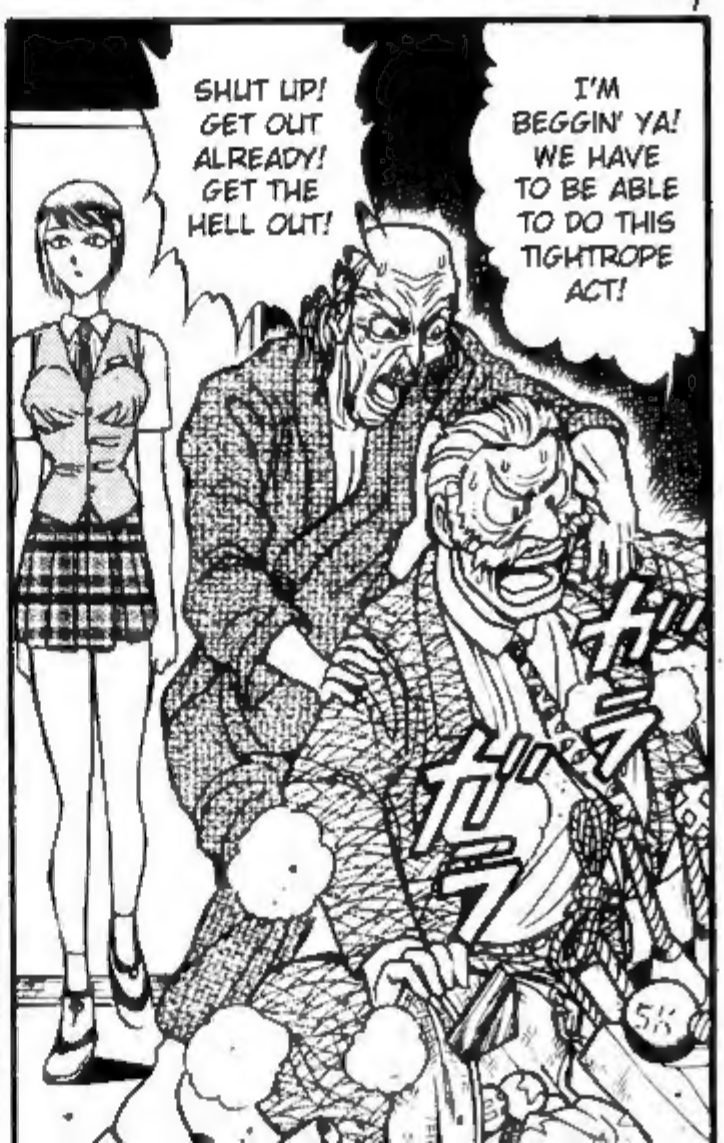
LIH, 'SCUSE ME, OLD MAN!

TOOLS ...
ALL KINDS OF TOOLS...

THAT'S ...


SHUT UP! GET OUT ALREADY! GET THE HELL OUT!
I'M BEGGIN' YA! WE HAVE TO BE ABLE TO DO THIS TIGHTROPE ACT!
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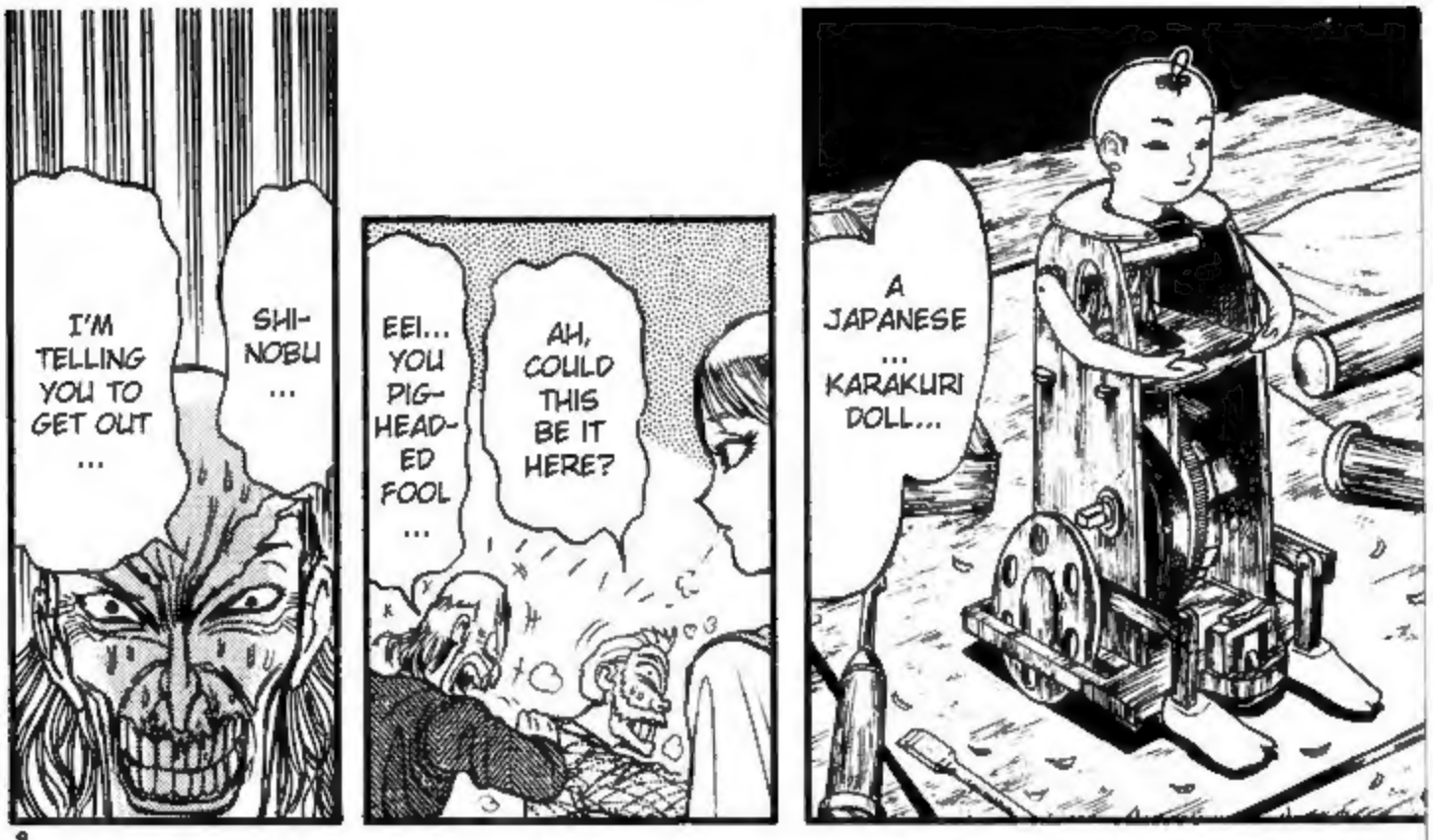
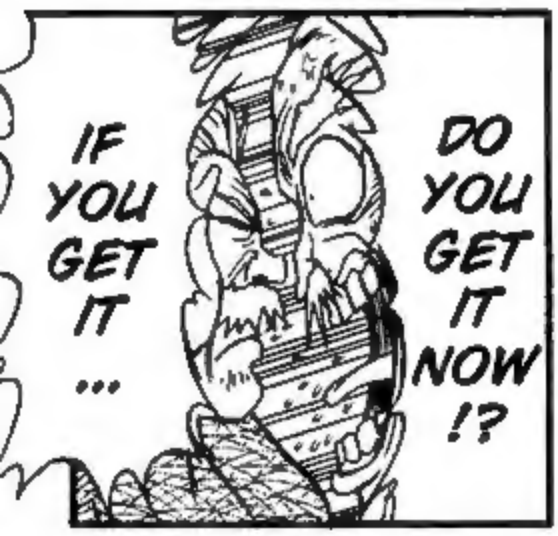

I'M TELLING YOU TO GET OUT ...
SHI-NOBU ...
EEI... YOU PIG-HEAD-ED FOOL ...
AH, COULD THIS BE IT HERE?
A JAPANESE ... KARAKURI DOLL...

DO YOU HE-AR ME !?

THAT'S GRAND-PA'S OLD VOICE!

GRAND-PA?


IF YOU GET IT ...
DO YOU GET IT NOW !?

GRAND-PA!
THIS DAMN BARKING GEEZER ...
AH, WHAT'S THAT YOU'RE SAYING, SHIROGANE?
THAT IS...IM-PRESSIVE.
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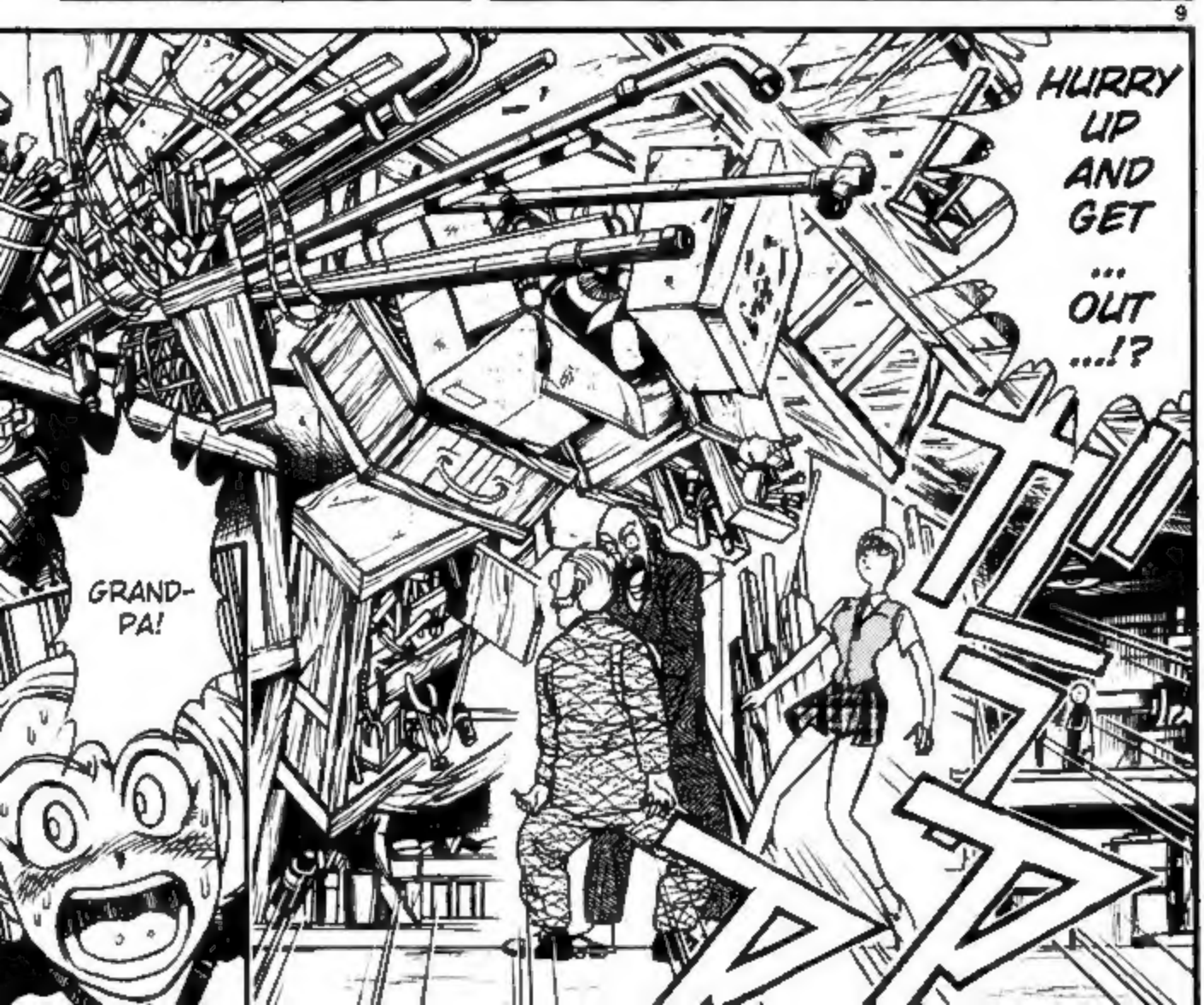
GRAND-PA!
HURRY UP AND GET ... OUT ...!?
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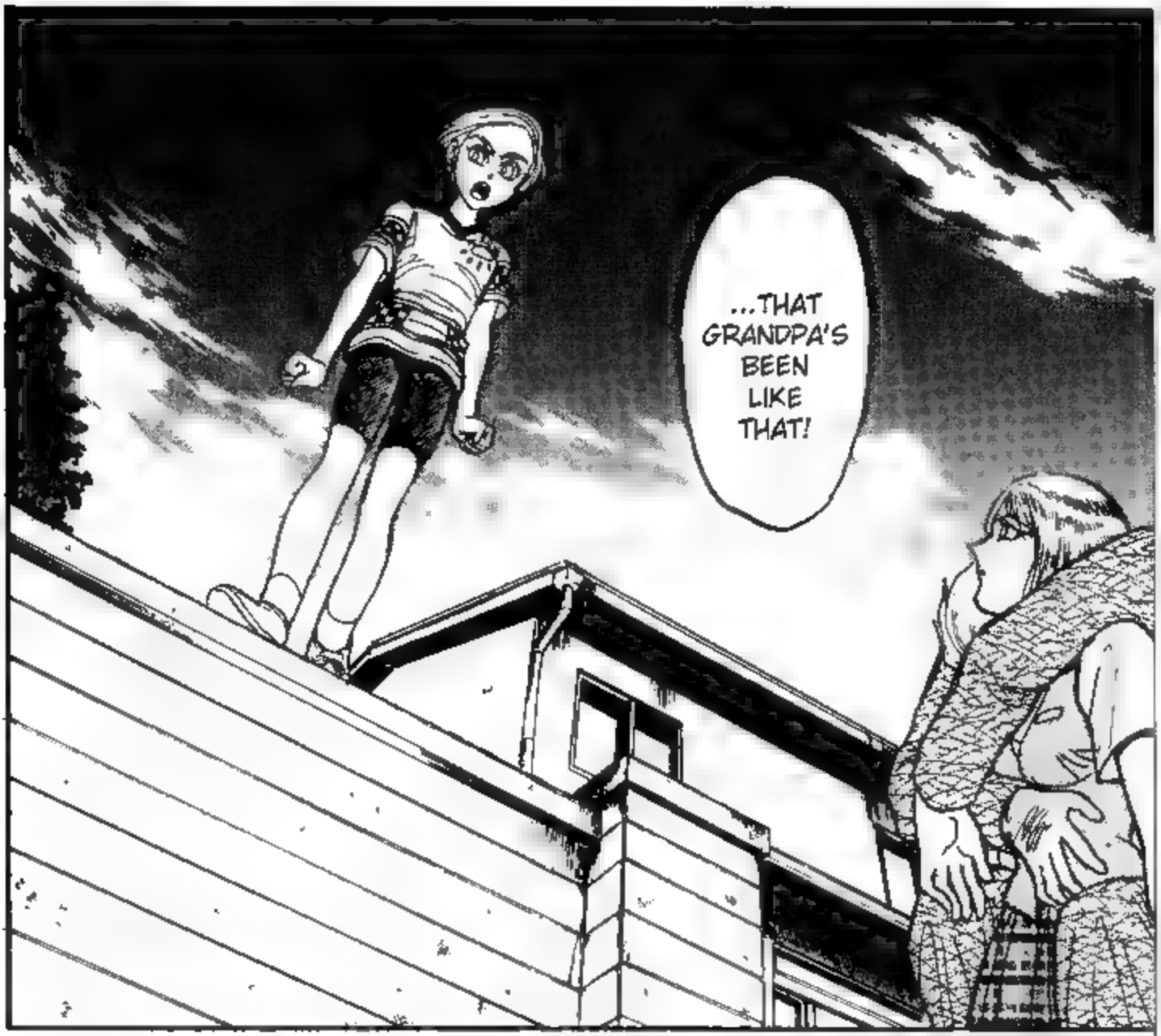
BOSS!?
GRANDPA, ARE YOU OKAY!?
モク
モク
モク
BOSS!!
ぽひん
ARE JUST WHAT I'D EXPECT ...
SHIRO-GANE... THOSE MOVES...

ER... I'M SORRY ABOUT YOUR SHED.
HONESTLY! I DON'T WANT TO BE INVOLVED WITH YOU PEOPLE EVER AGAIN.
YES...
TRY TO GET THAT ACROSS TO THIS OAF.
I'M NOT ONE OF YOU CIRCUS FOLK ANYMORE.
I'M AN ORDINARY SENIOR CITIZEN WHO LIVES IN THE HOME OF HIS STUFFY SALARYMAN SON.
12
ER... ABOUT THIS...
LET'S GO INSIDE, RYOUKO.
THIS ... . !!

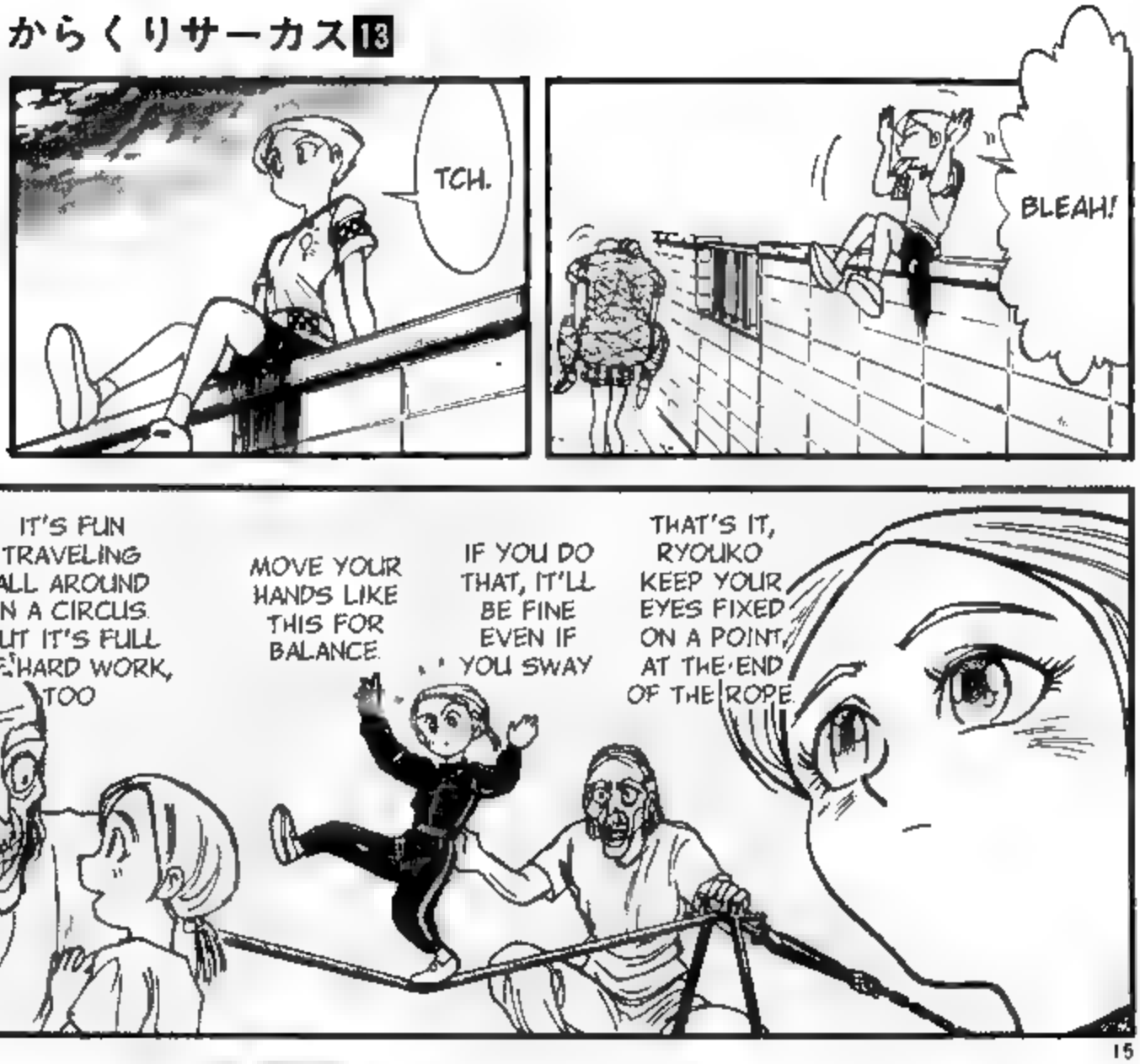
...I SEE. WELL THEN, EXCUSE ME...
KEH... THAT WASN'T NECESS-ARY!
IT HAPPENED TO BE IN MY HAND WHEN I LEFT THE SHED.
THAT HAS BEEN REPAIRED WITH A GREAT DEAL OF CARE.
HM...?
THAT WAS THE FIRST TIME.
HMPH.
SINCE HE LEFT THE WORLD OF CIRCUSES... THAT WAS... THE FIRST TIME...
SINCE THE NAKAMACHI CIRCUS FELL APART...
13


...THAT GRANDPA'S BEEN LIKE THAT!

I'M GLAD TO HEAR THAT...
I SEE...

FOR YOUR INFORMATION, I ABSOLUTELY HATE CIRCUSES! AND THE PEOPLE WHO WORK IN THEM TOO!!

WHY WOULD YOU SAY SOMETHING LIKE THAT EVEN THOUGH GRANDPA SENT YOU AWAY...
WHY ...


TCH.
BLEAH!
IT'S FUN TRAVELING ALL AROUND IN A CIRCUS. BUT IT'S FULL OF HARD WORK, TOO
MOVE YOUR HANDS LIKE THIS FOR BALANCE.
IF YOU DO THAT, IT'LL BE FINE EVEN IF YOU SWAY
THAT'S IT, RYOUKO KEEP YOUR EYES FIXED ON A POINT AT THE END OF THE ROPE.

WELL, HURRY UP AND COME DOWN! I HEARD FROM YOUR SCHOOL. YOU LEFT EARLY?
MOM, THAT'S NOT...!
トン
ARE YOU ALL RIGHT? YOU HAVE A PRACTICE TEST TOMORROW. HAVE YOU STUDIED?
YOU KNOW, TODAY I...
REALLY, IT MUST LOOK SO STRANGE TO THE NEIGH-BORS!
MOM ... I...
HON-ESTLY, WHAT IS YOUR GRAND-FATHER LETTING YOU GET UP TO?
OH, RYOUKO, WHAT ARE YOU DOING, CLIMBING UP THERE LIKE THAT!

NOW, WE DON'T HAVE THE MONEY TO GET YOU INTO A GOOD MIDDLE SCHOOL IN ANOTHER DISTRICT.
HOWEVER, RYOUKO, IF A TEACHER WERE TO GIVE THEIR APPROVAL ...
パタン
HURRY UP AND COME INSIDE! YOUR HOME TUTOR IS COMING.
UM...
YOU MUST GET INTO THAT SCHOOL, RYOUKO.
I'LL LET YOU STUDY EVEN IF YOU OVERDO IT.
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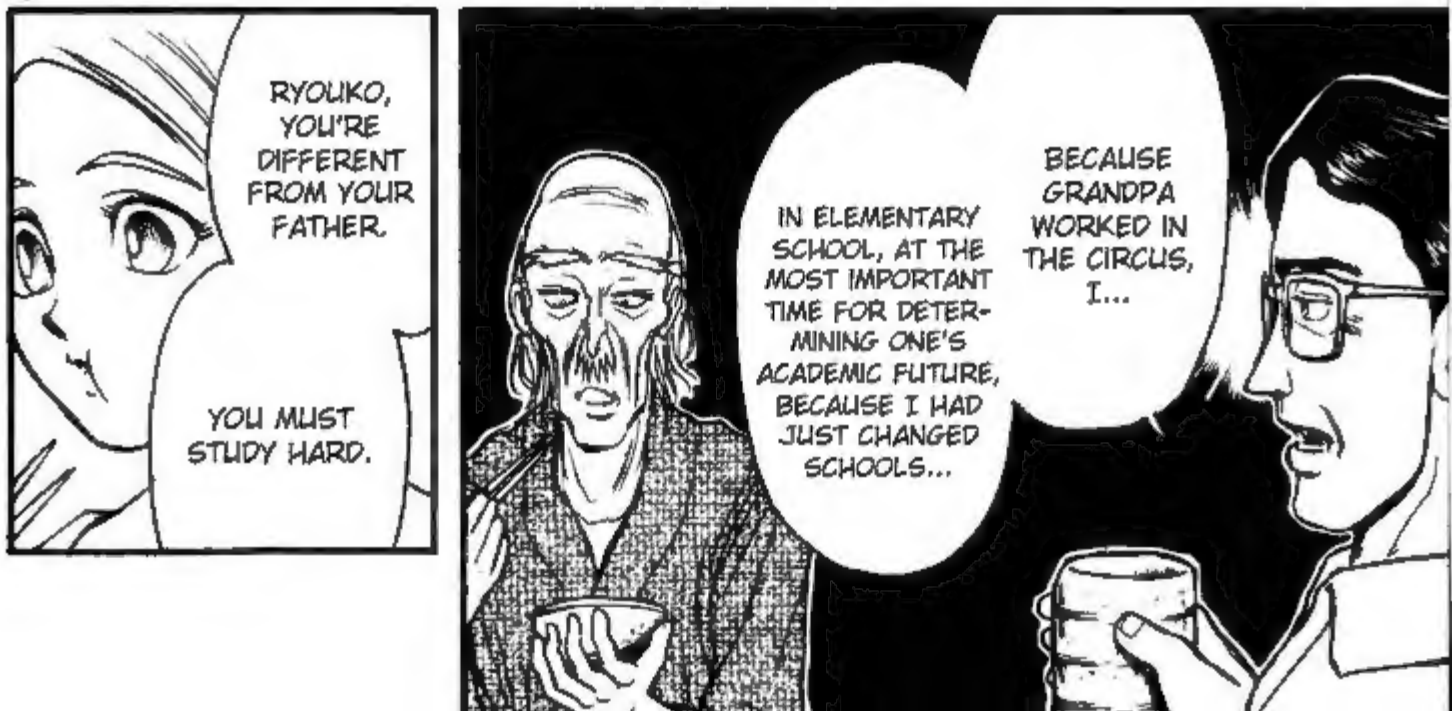
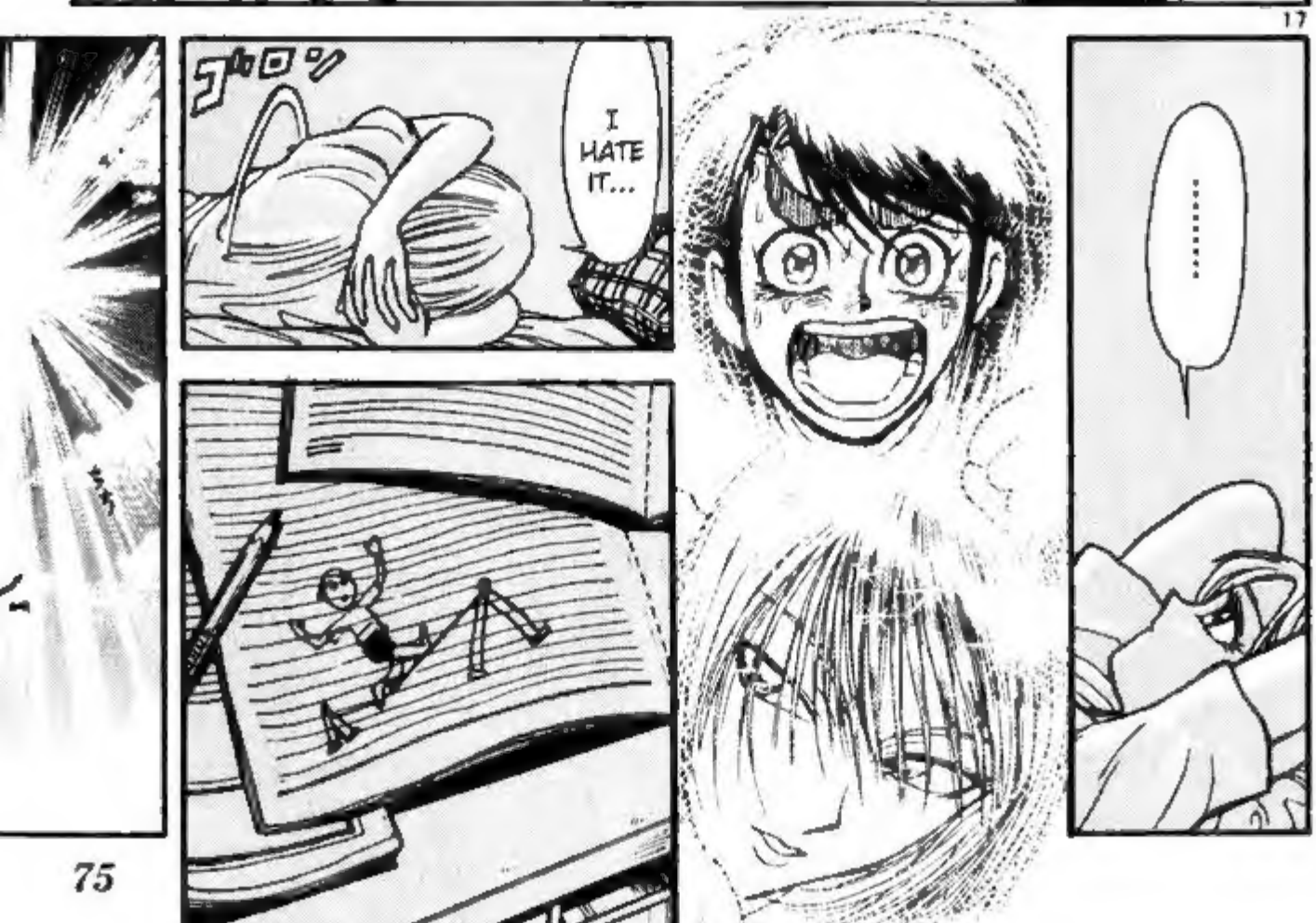
TO ACHIEVE THAT, YOU MUST NOT HOLD BACK.
JUST BECAUSE YOU'RE A GIRL DOESN'T MEAN YOU DON'T HAVE TO STUDY HARD. YOUR FATHER WILL DO AS MUCH AS HE CAN FOR YOU AS WELL.
I WAS VERY PROUD THAT YOU WERE RANKED 13TH IN THE PREVIOUS SCHOOL YEAR.
YEAH ...


RYOUKO, YOU'RE DIFFERENT FROM YOUR FATHER.
YOU MUST STUDY HARD.
IN ELEMENTARY SCHOOL, AT THE MOST IMPORTANT TIME FOR DETERMINING ONE'S ACADEMIC FUTURE, BECAUSE I HAD JUST CHANGED SCHOOLS...
BECAUSE GRANDPA WORKED IN THE CIRCUS, I...

パタン
YOU HAVE TO STUDY, RYOUKO.
YOU HAVE A PRACTICE TEST TOMORROW.
WHAT'S WRONG, UBUKATA? YOU AREN'T ACTING LIKE YOURSELF!

17


I HATE IT...
.....

WHAT ARE YOU HERE FOR!?
AH!!

I DON'T WANT THAT! GET LOST!
WE MADE A MESS YESTERDAY, SO WE ARE HERE TO CLEAN IT UP.
S-SAIGA !?

translation by funnuraba.tumblr.com

In Japan, students and their families choose which middle school they apply to, and getting into the right one is considered one of the deciding factors for their entire future.
For students trying to get into a highly regarded school that will get them into a good high school and university, the entrance exams are extremely high pressure, as you might imagine.

Thanks to Judash137 on the mangafox forums for removing the Japanese text, and to the anonymous person who tipped me off to that!

Any group with more experience or skill is welcome to take over at any time or to redo chapters I have already done if they are below the quality that this series deserves.